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6.2(d)

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Civic Forum a Growing Political Power**

*The Civic Forum is moving to fill the power vacuum left by the disintegration of Communist rule.* [redacted]

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The most graphic demonstration of the Forum's growing confidence is its announcement that the general strike called for Monday will proceed regardless of the outcome of the government shuffle and that its duration will depend on whether the opposition accepts the new government.

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The Forum's network is spreading; most major cities now have their own branches, and groups have reportedly also sprung up in the Army and in factories. Vaclav Havel, a leading Forum activist, has said he is willing to serve as president. In addition, the Forum this week proposed candidates for ministerial-level appointments—it included several Forum activists—in new Premier Calfa's government. [redacted]

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**Comment:** The spread of Forum organizations across the country indicates the opposition still has the support of a major segment of the population. It appears on track to establish itself as a legitimate power center able to demand more concessions from the regime.

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In pressing the regime to include more non-Communists in the government, the Forum is reacting to popular appeals for stronger action to counter Communist efforts to thwart reforms. Although Havel has been reluctant to become president, other opposition leaders probably persuaded him to throw his hat into the ring because they suspect former Premier Adamec wants the post.

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